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THE TEACHING OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY: PARTICULARLY IN THE LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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1. *Introductory*.—The most notable feature of the work of President Roosevelt's Country Life Commission¹ consisted in its forcing the attention of the American public to the supreme importance of the social problems of the open country. The colleges of agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture had already begun campaigns of agricultural extension, and the commission's report indicated the need of a still more comprehensive national program of extension work, which was taken up by these institutions and finally realized in the Smith-Lever act of May 8, 1914. As a result of these extension activities the agricultural-college faculties have had occasion to learn, through their larger contact with the farmers, that their problems are economic and social as well as technical. Consequently there has been a rapid increase in the interest in rural sociology and agricultural economics, and courses in these subjects have been introduced into the curricula of most of these institutions within the past few years. This

¹ *Report of the Country Life Commission* (Sturgis & Walton Co., 1911), p. 29.

attitude upon the part of the agricultural colleges was well exemplified by a remark of President Benjamin Ide Wheeler in his address of welcome to the Association of Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations assembled at Berkeley, California, last August. "Our business," he said, "is ultimately a sociological business. Considerations of soil technology but scratch the surface. What we are busied with here is trying to find out how to adjust this soil to the use of the families."¹

Our educational leaders have also awakened to a realization of the problems of the rural school until it has come to have the center of the stage at educational conventions. Many normal schools have introduced departments of rural education, and systems of county high-school training courses for rural teachers have been established in several states. Furthermore, there has been a very definite shift toward a social standard for evaluating educational aims and methods.² As a result of these factors the normal schools have also become interested in the problems of agricultural economics and rural sociology.

Finally, church leaders have awakened to the fact that the future of the rural church must rest upon a more social religion, and home mission boards have been busy in investigating rural social conditions in relation to the life of the church. The country minister is becoming interested in rural social and economic problems.

In view of the rapid increase in the interest in these subjects, and preparatory to further work in them, it has seemed to the writer that it might be worth while to make a study of the teaching of rural sociology at the present time, as well as of its history and tendencies. The following questionnaire was therefore prepared and sent to all the land-grant colleges and state universities and to such other colleges as were known to be giving instruction in the subject. In all about 90 institutions were addressed. Replies were received from 57 institutions, 44 of which taught some form of rural sociology and 13 of which did not. A number of the correspondents were sufficiently interested in the investigation to

¹ *Proc. 29th Ann. Conv. Am. Assoc. Agr. Coll. and Exp. Stations*, p. 19.

² See John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, particularly p. 138.

give quite detailed replies to the questions and in several cases to furnish complete outlines of the courses given. To all of these the writer wishes to express his appreciation of their courtesy.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR A SURVEY OF THE TEACHING OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

1. Name of institution.
2. Department of _____ head of department.
3. What courses are offered in rural sociology? (Please give the following data for each course.)
 - a) Name and number.
 - b) Hours per week, number of weeks, and credits per term.
 - c) Name of instructor of course.
 - d) Does instructor give part time to any other work?
 - e) Is this course required or elective?
 - f) In what class are most of the students in this course?
 - g) Is any practice or field work, such as surveys, reports of investigations, etc., required, and if so, of what nature?
 - h) In what year was this—or a similar—course first given?
 - i) If you have in printed or duplicated form any outline of the topics covered in the course, or indicating the text used or reading required, a copy will be appreciated.
4. What is the relation of your courses in rural sociology to—
 - a) General elementary sociology?
 - b) Elementary political economy?
 - c) Rural economics?
 - d) Education?(I.e., are any of these prerequisites or required in the same group of studies; are they taught in the same or a separate department; in the same or a different college?)
5. Please give your definition of rural sociology.
6. What, in your judgment, should be the contents of an elementary course in rural sociology adapted to the needs of agricultural students? Please indicate general topics.
7. In your opinion should the elementary courses in rural sociology and rural economics require general elementary sociology and political economy as prerequisites or should the elements of each subject be given from the agricultural viewpoint in one course covering both the general and rural phases of each subject?
8. In your opinion should the elementary courses in rural sociology and rural economics be given separately as distinct sciences or should there be one course in rural social science (possibly running through a year, and conceivably with different instructors for different semesters) built upon the thought of their interrelation?

9. If your institution offers no work in rural sociology, is any immediately contemplated?
10. Do you offer graduate work in rural sociology leading to advanced degrees?
11. Please send a catalogue of your institution or circular covering the work of your department.
12. What other colleges or normal schools in your state are giving courses in rural sociology? Please give name and address of instructor, if known.
13. May I quote your answers above? None will be quoted without permission.
14. Name and address of person or persons answering above.

2. *Where taught.*—From the replies received indicating the many sorts of institutions which are teaching the subject, it became evident that only by an examination of the catalogues of a large number could any fair estimate be made of the extent to which rural sociology is now taught. The files of college and normal-school catalogues in the University of Chicago Library were therefore examined. In this search only those for the last two years were used, and no institutions were counted which did not give work of collegiate grade in economics or sociology, or both. Obviously the selection was somewhat arbitrary, and undoubtedly some institutions have escaped, but it is believed that the number examined is sufficient to make the general conclusions fairly accurate and of some value.

Table I shows the number of institutions teaching rural sociology by states and classes of institutions. It shows that 64 per cent of the 48 land-grant colleges, 45 per cent of the 20 state universities—separate from land-grant colleges—32 per cent of the 91 normal schools, and 9 per cent of 301 other colleges and universities, or 21 per cent of the total 460 institutions examined, are teaching rural sociology. It is obvious that in sparsely settled states like Arizona, Montana, and New Mexico there is but little demand for rural sociology, but it seems odd that agricultural states like Nebraska and South Carolina do not have a single institution teaching this subject. It is also interesting to note that the subject finds but little appreciation in the curricula of eastern institutions. Thus of the 148 institutions in the 15 states of the Atlantic seaboard but 21, or 13 per cent, give instruction in rural sociology, and most of these are land-grant colleges, for of the 94

private colleges and universities in these states only 4, Harvard University (and Radcliffe College), Teachers College, of Columbia University, Syracuse University, and Adelphi College, give courses. Table II gives a list of the institutions found giving some sort of instruction in rural sociology.¹

Undoubtedly some of the courses announced in catalogues may not as yet have been given, but even so they indicate the appreciation of the subject. Out of 14 institutions replying that they offered no rural sociology, 6 intend to introduce a course within the next year or two.

3. *Historical*.—The late Professor C. R. Henderson seems to have been the first to offer a course on rural social life in this country. In the announcements of the Department of Sociology of the University of Chicago for 1894-95 there appeared:

31. Social Conditions in American Rural Life. Some problems of amelioration, presented by life on American farms and in villages, will be considered. M. First Term. Winter Quarter. Associate Professor Henderson.

The *Quarterly Calendar* (III, No. 4) shows that 16 students were registered in the first class. From that time until two or three years before his death Professor Henderson gave the course almost every summer, though the name was changed to "Rural Communities." Professor Henderson also seems to have been the first to call the attention of sociologists to the importance of this field. In discussing "The Scope of Social Technology" in 1901 he called attention to the rural community, and after referring to the economico-political studies of rural problems made in Germany, he said:

When men of science once apprehend the vastness of this neglected field, they will bring to it the same acumen, patience, and method which have won worthy triumphs in the production of wealth. Granting that the economic basis must be laid firmly, may we not now insist that a part of scientific labor be drafted off into other fields of research? We actually have more and better books on breeding cattle and marketing corn than on forming citizens or organizing culture. Is it not worth while to attempt a social technology

¹ Doubtless some institutions have been missed, as the course in rural sociology is often given in some department other than that in which it might be expected to be given.

	U	I	.....	.....	3	0	21	3	25	4
New York.....	U	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	I	I
Nevada.....	U	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	8	2
North Carolina.....	C	O	I	I	I	I	5	0	I	3
North Dakota.....	U	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	28	3	31	6
Ohio.....	C	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	3	0	10	7
Oklahoma.....	C	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	4	I	6	2
Oregon.....	C	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	22	0	20	I
Pennsylvania.....	C	O	.....	.....	.....	.....	I	0	2	I
Rhode Island.....	C	O	.....	.....	.....	.....	4	0	6	0
South Carolina.....	C	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	5	0	11	2
South Dakota.....	U	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	10	2	13	5
Tennessee.....	C	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	7	I	I	2
Texas.....	C	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	2
Utah.....	C	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	6	0	10	2
Virginia.....	C	O	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	0	3	I
Vermont.....	U	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	0	7	4
Washington.....	C	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	4	2	7	I
West Virginia.....	U	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	3	0	7	I
Wisconsin.....	U	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	0	I	13	2
Wyoming.....	U	I	.....	.....	.....	.....	7	.....	I	I
Total.....	48	31 (64 per cent)	20	9 (45 per cent)	91	30 (32 per cent)	301	29 (9 per cent)	460	99 (21 per cent)

TABLE II
LIST OF INSTITUTIONS TEACHING RURAL SOCIOLOGY

State	Land-Grant College or State University	Colleges and Universities	Normal Schools
Alabama.....			State Normal School, Troy
Arizona.....			
Arkansas.....			State Normal School, Conway
California.....		University of Southern California	
Colorado.....			State Normal School, Gunnison
Connecticut.....			
Florida.....	University		
Georgia.....	University—State College of Agriculture		
Idaho.....	University		
Illinois.....	University	University of Chicago	State Normal School, Athens
		Eureka College	State Normal School, Albion
		Illinois Wesleyan University	State Normal School, Lewiston
		Lombard College	State Normal University
		Butler College	
		Manchester College	
		Simpson College	
Indiana.....	University		State Teachers' College
Iowa.....	University		
	State College		
Kansas.....	University		
	Agricultural College		
Kentucky.....	University	College of Emporia	State Normal School, Bowling Green
Louisiana.....		Ottawa University	State Normal School, Natchitoches
Maine.....		Berea College	
Maryland.....	University		
Massachusetts.....	State College of Agriculture		
	Agricultural College		
Michigan.....	University	Harvard University	
		(Radcliffe College)	
		Olivet College	
	University		Central State Normal School, Mt. Pleasant
	Agricultural College		Western State Normal School, Kalamazoo
Minnesota.....			
Mississippi.....	University		
Missouri.....	Agricultural College		
	University	William Jewell College	1st District State Normal School, Kirksville
			4th District State Normal School,
			Springfield
			5th District State Normal School,
			Marysville

New Hampshire.	State College	.....	.....	State Normal School, Keene
New York.	Cornell University	.....	Syracuse University	.....
Nevada.	University	.....	Adelphi College	.....
North Carolina.	University	.....	Teachers College, Columbia Uni-	.....
North Dakota.	Agricultural College	.....	versity	.....
Ohio.	University	.....	.....	East Carolina Teachers' Training School
Oklahoma.	University	.....	Baldwin-Wallace College	Bowling Green State Normal School
	Agricultural and Mechanical College	.....	Defiance College	Kent State Normal School
		.....	Miami University	.....
		.....	Ohio Wesleyan University	.....
Oregon.	Agricultural College	.....	.....	Northeastern State Normal School, Tah-
Pennsylvania.	State College	.....	Pacific University	lequah
Rhode Island.	University	.....	.....	Southwestern State Normal School,
South Dakota.	State College of Agriculture	.....	.....	Weatherford
Tennessee.	University	.....	George Peabody College	Central State Normal School, Edmond
		.....	Lincoln Memorial University	East Central State Normal School, Ada
		.....	Southwestern University	Southeastern State Normal School,
		.....	.....	Durant
Texas.	Agricultural and Mechanical College	.....	.....	.....
Utah.	University	.....	.....	Millersville State Normal School
Virginia.	Agricultural College	.....	.....	.....
		.....	.....	West Tennessee State Normal School,
Vermont.	University	.....	.....	Memphis
Washington.	State College	.....	.....	Middle Tennessee State Normal School,
		.....	College of Puget Sound	Murfreesboro
		.....	Whitman College	.....
West Virginia.	University	.....	Lawrence College	State Female Normal School, Farmville
Wisconsin.	University	.....	.....	State Normal School, Harrisonburg
Wyoming.	University	.....	.....	State Normal School, Bellingham

of the rural community? And would not even a failure in the attempt be worthy of respect?¹

In the fall of 1902 Kenyon L. Butterfield was made instructor in rural sociology at the University of Michigan and gave his first course in that subject. In 1903 Mr. Butterfield called attention to the importance of the study of the social sciences by agricultural students in an article entitled, "An Untilled Field in American Agricultural Education,"² in which he defined rural social science and outlined its content. In 1904, as president of the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, he gave the first course in rural sociology given in any of the land-grant colleges. In an address before the American Association of Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations in 1905 he again pointed out the importance of the social sciences in agricultural education:

. . . the social sciences, in their relation to the rural problem particularly, must receive a consideration commensurate with the importance of the industrial and political and social phases of the farm question. . . . If we examine our agricultural course from this standpoint, we shall have to admit that it has the flaw common to most industrial courses. It is too technical. It is not truly vocational. It does not present the social viewpoint. It does not stimulate the student to social activity. It does not give him a foundation for intelligent social service when he shall go to the farm. He should study agricultural economics and rural sociology both because rural society needs leaders and because in the arming of the man the knowledge of society's problems is just as vital as either expert information or personal culture.³

In 1907 President Butterfield, in his *Chapters on Rural Progress*, further expanded this thought and gave specific outlines for courses in agricultural economics and in rural sociology.

Writing two years later (1909) concerning the "Scope and Work of Colleges of Agriculture," Professor L. H. Bailey summarized the "Economic and Social Subjects," as follows:

These subjects are practically untouched, although the terms "rural economics" and "rural sociology" are coming into the curricula of the colleges of agriculture. . . . These subjects are in many ways the most important that fall to the field of a college of agriculture. Economic and social questions

¹ *American Journal of Sociology*, VI (January, 1901), 476.

² *Popular Science Monthly*, LXIII (1903), 257-61.

³ *Ibid.*, LXVII (1905), 357, 360.

are proper subjects to be taught in a college of agriculture, so far as they bear on rural questions. . . . Rural economics is as logically a part of an agricultural curriculum as is agricultural chemistry. . . . The entire effort of a college of agriculture is devoted to the elevation of country living; that is, it eventuates into social and economic studies.¹

In 1902 Mr. Frank L. Tolman, in his paper on "The Study of Sociology in Institutions of Learning in the United States,"² found the "sociology of the rural group" taught only at the University of Chicago, though it was given incidental treatment in courses at Trinity College, Connecticut, the University of Illinois, Iowa College, the University of Michigan, Columbia University, the University of Wooster, and the University of Wisconsin, as reported by them.

Among the replies received 36 have stated definitely when the course was first given at those institutions. By years these may be summarized as follows: 1894-95, University of Chicago; 1902, University of Michigan; 1904-5, Rhode Island College and Cornell University; 1906-7, University of Missouri and Massachusetts Agricultural College; 1908-9, University of North Dakota; 1910-11, 2 institutions; 1911-12, 2; 1912-13, 4; 1913-14, 5; 1914-15, 8; 1915-16, 6; 1916-17, 2 (announced). It seems safe to infer that probably not over a dozen institutions were teaching rural sociology prior to 1910, and that fully half of those now offering courses have established them within the past three years.

4. *Content of course.*—a) Name: The name of a course is not necessarily a safe index of its content, and yet it often does have a considerable significance by way of indicating the instructor's concept of the course. Out of 68 colleges and universities listed (excluding normal schools), 37, or 60 per cent, used the term "Rural Sociology." From the diverse content of the course, as discussed below, it seems that this term has preference simply because it is concise; or may it not be because it sounds more "scientific"? To indicate the wide diversity of titles used it may be stated that the other 32 institutions have 22 different names. These have been grouped under closely related names, as follows:

¹ *Cyclopedia of Agriculture*, IV, 437.

² *American Journal of Sociology*, III, 90.

"Rural Sociology and Economics," 2; "Rural Economics" (including social life), 2; "Rural Social Problems," 8; "Rural Communities," 10; "Rural Social Development," 3; "Rural Life," 3; "Rural Society," "Country Life Movement," "Principles of Rural Life and Education," "Social Science," and "Economic and Social Status of Rural Communities," 1 each. It is significant to note that some of the institutions which have the oldest and largest departments of sociology do not use the term "Rural Sociology." Thus the universities of Illinois and Michigan prefer "The Social Problems of Rural Communities"; the University of Iowa and Harvard use "Rural Social Development"; Wisconsin uses "Rural Life"; the University of Chicago, "Rural Communities"; and Teachers College, Columbia, "The Rural Community."

b) Definition: Many of the correspondents failed to give any reply to question 5, asking for a definition of the subject, some stating that their definitions were changing so frequently that they hardly seemed worthy of statement. One of the workers who has done most in this field replied, "We have not yet defined rural sociology." Most of the definitions indicate that the subject is distinctly a part of applied sociology or social technology.¹ Thus Professor Paul L. Vogt, of Ohio State University, replies:

Rural sociology is the study of the forces and conditions of rural life as a basis for constructive action in developing and maintaining a scientifically efficient civilization in the country.

Professor John Phelan, of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, says:

Rural sociology is a study of the social forces and factors operating in rural life, with a view to its more adequate organization.

Professor L. L. Bernard, of the University of Missouri:

The study of the forces and activities—institutional and non-institutional—which are concerned with the evolution, organization, and improvement of rural life.

¹ Cf. E. G. Nourse, "What is Agricultural Economics?" *Journal of Political Economy*, XXIV (April, 1916), 378, footnote: "This ['a practical program of rural betterment'—*supra*, 378] in turn shades off into rural sociology (whatever that is). And, as in the case of social economics in general, it runs ambitiously toward ethical criticism and evaluation."

Professor A. S. Harding, of the South Dakota Agricultural College:

Rural sociology is concerned with the evolution, present status, and suggested betterment of rural social institutions.

Professor George H. von Tungeln, Iowa State College:

Rural sociology is a study of men living together in the country, and of forces and factors which are acted upon by men and which react upon them in their relation with one another.

Professor Ernest Burnham, of the Western State Normal School, Kalamazoo, Michigan, introduces a new note by calling attention to the rural-urban relation:

Rural sociology is the science of the reciprocal relations of human beings living in rural communities. It also considers the reciprocal relations of rural and urban communities.

The two following emphasize the study of the group. Professor E. L. Holton, of the Kansas Agricultural College, says:

As we teach it, it is a study of institutions and groups or community life in the open country.

And Professor E. C. Branson, of the University of North Carolina, says:

A study of the group actions and reactions of human nature under country conditions.

Professor Newell L. Sims, of the University of Florida, says:

In general it is applied sociology; specifically, a study of rural conditions in the light of the knowledge of society with a view to discovering and suggesting ways of improving them.

The philanthropic idea seems to crop out in the definition of Professor G. Coray, of the University of Utah:

Exposition of the social problems of rural life with suggestions for home and neighborhood amelioration.

On the other hand, three correspondents have very clearly indicated their denial of there being a science of rural sociology, which view is evidently approved by many who have not replied to this question, from the fact that they have discarded the name "Rural Sociology," as indicated above. Thus Professor E. C. Hayes, of the University of Illinois, says: "Never use the

expression [rural sociology]. Sociology is sociology; wherever studied the principles are the same."

Professor Charles D. Bohannon, of the University of Kentucky, replies:

In the sense in which the word sociology is commonly used I doubt very much if it is strictly accurate to speak of a Rural Sociology; that is, the principles of social and psychic development of individuals and of groups are fundamentally the same whether that development takes place in town or country, the different qualities and degrees of development being due to the differences in physical and social environment. Therefore it has seemed to me that Rural Sociology was a misnomer for the work as I gave it here, and I have, therefore, accordingly changed it to Rural Social Problems.

Dr. W. S. Thompson, of the University of Michigan, also says:

It does not seem to me that there is a peculiar kind of sociology which may be called rural sociology. This is the reason I have called the course the Social Problems of Rural Life rather than Rural Sociology.

Finally, it is interesting to compare the definition which President Butterfield gave in his *Chapters in Rural Progress* (1907):

Rural social science is the application of the principles of the social sciences, especially of economics and sociology, to the problems that confront the American farmer [p. 219].

Comment upon the foregoing definitions seems superfluous, but the writer merely wishes to state that the term rural sociology in the present article is used merely as a matter of convenience, as doubtless is the case with much of its present usage, without any implied position pro or con as to the validity of a rural sociology as a science.

c) Content: Of the replies received, only 14 gave any very full answer to question 3i asking for an outline of the course given. However, those outlines received are representative and seem to be fairly typical of different methods of presentation as judged by the descriptions of other courses given in the catalogue. The courses seem to group themselves into two main classes, those organized on a systematic or scientific basis and those organized upon the basis of a consideration of important topics or problems. A skeleton outline of a few of the systematic courses will best indicate their nature.

MASSACHUSETTS AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, PROFESSOR JOHN PHELAN
ELEMENTS OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

- I. Introduction.
 1. Definition.
 2. Statement of relationships to other sciences.
 3. The social problems of rural life (a brief statement).
- II. The rural social status.
 1. The social background of rural life in the United States.
 2. The social condition of the rural people.
 3. The rural mind (social psychology).
 4. Sociological aspects of some current agricultural questions.
- III. Rural institutions.
 1. The home.
 2. The church.
 3. The school.
 4. The community.
- IV. Rural social organization.
 1. Need of organization.
 2. History of development.
 3. Community, county, state, and national aspects of organization.
- V. Rural social service.
 1. Opportunities.
 2. History of development.
 3. Restatement of problems of rural life.
 4. Leadership, resident and non-resident.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, PROFESSOR PAUL L. VOGT
RURAL COMMUNITY LIFE

- I. Introduction.

Definition. Statement of problems. Rural community contrasted with urban.
- II. Conditions essential for a healthful social life in a rural community. [Normative.]
- III. Existing conditions. Movement of population; economic conditions; rural health; rural morality; rural social life; farm labor.
- IV. Improvement of rural life. [Considered under institutions, agencies, and methods.]

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, PROFESSOR SCOTT E. W. BEDFORD
RURAL COMMUNITIES

- I. Introduction. Principles of social technology, etc.
- II. The Social technology of rural communities.
- III. Geographical and biological factors in rural life.

- IV. Transportation and communication.
- V. The business side of farming.
- VI. Economic and social surveys.
- VII. The farm home.
- VIII. Rural religion.
- IX. Rural education.
- X. Rural recreation.
- XI. Charities and corrections.
- XII. Social control.
- XIII. Summary and conclusion.

NEW HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE, PROFESSOR E. R. GROVES

RURAL AND COMMUNITY SOCIOLOGY

A study of the social significance, conditions, and resources of American country life with the purpose of developing community leadership.

A. Rural ethnology and sociology. Land basis of society, origin of primitive agriculture, animal and plant life as factors in human progress, modern agriculture and population, migration, immigration, and city drift.

B. Rural social psychology. Imitation and city influence, suggestibility, conflict, discussion, public opinion, and community pride.

C. Rural social pathology. Dependents, defectives, and delinquents in their relation to the country community, problem of rural police protection, moral problems of the rural community.

D. Rural progress. Survey making, communication, community advertising, associations and clubs, rural education, wider use of rural schoolhouses, rural school gardens, community competition, fairs, recreation, the rural church, and welfare work.

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, PROFESSOR JEROME DOWD

RURAL SOCIOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Definition. | 7. Intellectual life. |
| 2. Problems. | 8. Aesthetic life. |
| 3. Health and sanitation. | 9. Social life. |
| 4. Family life. | 10. Manners and ceremonies. |
| 5. Political life. | 11. Charities and corrections. |
| 6. Religious life. | |

WESTERN STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, KALAMAZOO, MICH., PROFESSOR

ERNEST BURNHAM

RURAL SOCIOLOGY

- A. Definitions.
- B. Present rural conditions: population; economic status; civic earnestness; educational status; religious life.

- C. Problems of progress.
 - 1. Conservation of population.
 - 2. Economic stability and satisfaction.
 - 3. Sensitizing the civic conscience.
 - 4. Educational capitalization of each generation.
 - 5. Fundamental necessity of religion as a sanction.
- D. The ideal.
 - 1. Integration.
 - 2. Unification and consciously co-operative progress.

Professor Burnham writes, "Rural sociology is here given from a civic rather than an industrial point of view."

Judging from the replies received and from catalogue announcements, a much larger number of institutions have organized the course on the topical or problem basis. There is a clear distinction between a topical and a problem organization when it is considered from a pedagogical standpoint, but the replies received do not enable one to distinguish between them in most cases, and they are therefore considered together. Of these the outline of the course at the University of Missouri, as given by Professor L. L. Bernard, is fairly typical.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, PROFESSOR L. L. BERNARD
RURAL SOCIOLOGY

- 1. Introduction—the problem.
- 2. The movement of rural population.
- 3. The physical background—typical communities.
- 4. The psychic background—the rural mind.
- 5. The development of country life.
- 6. Scientific methods and rural life.
- 7. Rural co-operation.
- 8. Social aspects of rural labor, ownership, tenancy.
- 9. The rural family and the home.
- 10. Communication and transportation in the country.
- 11. Rural health and sanitation—safeguards and conveniences.
- 12. Rural health and sanitation—prevention and control.
- 13. Rural morality.
- 14. Rural recreation.
- 15. The rural social center.
- 16. The rural church—religion and rural life.
- 17. The rural church—combining forces for efficiency.
- 18. The rural church—as rural leader.

19. Rural clubs and related organizations.
20. The rural school—its social function.
21. The rural school—its vocational relations.
22. The rural school—consolidation and efficiency.
23. Rural extension as an educational and socializing agency.
24. The rural library.
25. The rural press and literature.
26. Local government and the rural community.
27. Rural charities and corrections.
28. Immigrants and negroes in the rural community.
29. Rural leadership.
30. The rural social survey.

The replies to question 6 usually refer simply to the course as given at the specific institutions, replying to the questionnaire, but several of them take very definite positions as to the content of the course for an agricultural student. Thus Professor G. N. Lauman, of the New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University, says:

With the emphasis that is laid on the purely technical agricultural studies the agricultural student has neither the time nor the preparation to go deeply into the general economic and social features of rural life. We cannot expect him to have had fundamental courses in both economics and sociology, and therefore to give him the fundamentals of rural life we give him a three-hour elective course, covering what is known of the fundamentals, and leave the speculative discussion and heaping up of details to the specializing student who is compelled to get into the general fields of economics and sociology.

Professor E. C. Hayes, of the University of Illinois, writes:

No attempt to make this a *science*.

1. Primary aim to get students to apprehend what are the *values* to be sought in life rural or urban, as distinguished from all *means* promoting ends.
2. Secondary aim to have them understand the nature and importance of those *group expectations* that are to a community what a standard of living is to an individual, save that they refer to far more than economic expenditure.
3. Items in the content of developed group expectation in the rural community.
4. Distinctive characteristics of the rural community, to be taken advantage of or to be overcome or offset.
5. Correlation between rural and urban life in various particulars.
6. Specific social activities that may promote rural life, and how to organize and conduct them.
7. Students prepare papers on 25 special topics, which are discussed.

Professor E. C. Branson, of the University of North Carolina, who has been one of the most successful teachers in arousing interest in this field, refers to the "Report on the Teaching of the Social Studies in Secondary Schools," which forms part of the report of the National Education Association Commission on Secondary Education, and is now being published as a bulletin of the United States Bureau of Education, as embodying his point of view. Professor Branson's work with the "Georgia Club"¹ and the "Home-County Club Studies"² in North Carolina are so well known as hardly to need comment. Professor Branson writes, "My fundamental idea is a *direct* assault upon the problems themselves." Possibly his method might be characterized as one of locality or community study.

Professor Howard W. Odum, of the Peabody School of Education, University of Georgia, has also developed the problem method of community study and has issued an excellent syllabus³ for his classes. Professor Odum gives a list of seven problems under each of twenty general headings covering rural social problems. The student is also required to list a half-dozen additional topics worthy of study under each heading. Concerning this method he makes the following statement in the Introductory Note:

The principle underlying the program of community study is based upon two larger considerations: First, progress is necessarily preceded by and is based upon results of diligent study and research, whether it be in invention industry, commerce, education, or other aspects of social welfare; second, it may be assumed that the earnest student of education and social problems, or the efficient citizen, proposes to become a part of the progress of his generation by enlisting his or her services as an aid to determining or enacting steps of social progress. It should follow, then, that reasonable efforts will be advantageous in the development of individual energies and ability; in the improvement of community welfare; in contributing to the sum total of knowledge, and in magnifying proper methods of study and the spirit of social service.

¹ E. C. Branson, "The Georgia Club, at the State Normal School, Athens, Georgia, for the Study of Rural Sociology," *U.S. Bureau of Education Bulletin*, 1913, No. 23. Whole Number 533.

² E. C. Branson, "Syllabus of Home-County Club Studies," *University of North Carolina Record*, September, 1914, No. 121. Extension Ser. No. 9.

³ Howard W. Odum, "Practical Community Studies," *Bulletin of the University of Georgia*, XIV, No. 8c.

That there is no place here for the mere "fad" of research and that sacrifice and sustained efforts are necessary requirements will need no conventional proof.

One of the correspondents also points out that the topical method has the advantage of adapting itself to local needs, for the topics that might be of particular value or interest in the South might not be so in New England, or vice versa.

That elementary courses of theoretical science should be required of students who are not taking technical curricula involving the application of those sciences has in recent years been challenged upon pedagogical grounds.¹ In view of the fact that in many agricultural curricula no social science is required and that in but 6 of them is either sociology or political economy required as a prerequisite for the course in rural sociology, the answers to question 7 are of peculiar interest. Of 30 land-grant colleges and universities replying specifically to this question, 18 favor elementary courses as prerequisite to rural sociology and economics, or in a few cases an option between elementary sociology and economics, though only 6 of them actually *do* have such prerequisites. One replied, "desirable, but impracticable"; another, "desirable if practicable"; another, "desirable but not necessary"; and a fourth, "helpful." Only 2 land-grant colleges and 3 separate state universities favored the idea of a single course covering both the general and the rural phases of economics or sociology presented from the agricultural viewpoint.

Professor George H. von Tungeln expressed the usual view in his reply:

General elementary courses should precede, because of the need of a broad foundation on which to interpret the rural conditions.

On the other hand, Professor L. L. Bernard well describes the actual situation when he says:

I think it preferable that courses in sociology and economics should precede rural sociology and rural economics respectively, but I think that any such rigid or general requirement is impracticable under present conditions, for it would mean that those students who need the course most, especially those in agriculture, education, and journalism, would be prevented from taking it

¹ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, pp. 334-35.

except in occasional instances. Our requirement of elementary sociology as prerequisite for education and journalism students has much this effect, but not so much as would be noticed if required in agriculture. Nor do I think that an elementary course in rural sociology is such prerequisite to a reasonably clear understanding of the subject.

There has also been a difference of opinion as to the advisability of separating the sociological and economic phases of rural social science as in other special fields of social science. Question 8 was designed to elicit opinion upon this matter. Of 31 replies, 21 favor separate courses and 10 favor a single course, though only 2 of the 10 are actually giving but a single course covering rural sociology and economics.¹ The quotation above from Professor Lauman bears directly on this question. Of the 48 land-grant colleges, 24 offer both rural sociology and rural economics, 12 offer one or the other, and 12 offer neither. Furthermore, in practically half of these institutions the two subjects are taught by separate departments.

In reply to question 3g, 29 correspondents gave definite information concerning whether the course required investigation or field work. Of these, 13 require more or less personal investigation, survey work, reports on special topics, etc. Six require only term papers or reports which may be the result of library work. Ten have no such requirements, as far as stated. Tennessee has required the survey of the home county by means of the census reports, similar to the work in Georgia and North Carolina. It is quite evident that those institutions in which the course is best organized are coming to require as much personal investigation of particular problems or communities as is feasible.

5. *Administrative features.*—a) Departmental Relations: Questions 2 and 4 were designed to ascertain what departments teach rural sociology and to which of the social sciences it is most intimately connected in departmental organization. In 17 cases out of 42 furnishing necessary data, rural sociology is taught in the same department as economics and general sociology. Of these 17 departments, 11 are "Economics and Sociology" and 3 are

¹ See E. G. Nourse, "What Is Agricultural Economics?" *Journal of Political Economy*, XXIV (April, 1916), 363-81.

"History and Economics." In 10 cases it is taught in the department of sociology. In 4 cases the department is one of rural economics and sociology, and in 3 others it is the department of economics, which also includes rural economics, but not general sociology. In 6 cases (including Teachers College, Columbia University) it is taught in a department which also teaches agricultural education or rural education. The Massachusetts Agricultural College has the only separate department of rural sociology, but it is organized with the departments of rural education and rural economics in a division of rural social science.

b) Time: Of 69 colleges and universities, 3 give but a one-hour course in rural sociology, 30 give a two-hour course, and 35 give three hours. The University of North Carolina gives a three-hour course extending through two semesters, being the only one found giving over three hours.¹

c) Requirements: Rural sociology (as such) is a required course for agricultural students at only 2 institutions—the Massachusetts Agricultural College and the University of Florida. At the Kansas Agricultural College it is optional, a choice being permitted between it and rural economics. At the University of Vermont a course in rural economics and sociology is required. The subject of rural economics seems to be required of agricultural students at 14 land-grant colleges.

In this connection it is interesting to note the requirements in the social sciences in the agricultural curricula of those land-grant colleges offering rural sociology. Of these 31 institutions, 16 require an average of four hours of political economy; 10 require an average of three hours of agricultural economics, though only 4 of these require any other political economy; 4 require an average of three and a half hours of elementary sociology; 2 require a course in "agricultural industry," two or three hours; and 1 requires industrial history, three hours, while 3 have no requirements. This does not take into account any history requirements, which, however, are rather meager.

¹In these figures term-hours have been reduced to semester-hours, five term-hours being classed with three semester-hours though the actual time is one-third hour more.

Considering the social-science requirements, exclusive of history, at all of the 48 land-grant colleges, it was found that they averaged 5.2 semester-hours: 7 have none, 11 require three hours, 12 require six hours, and the remainder lie between the minimum and a maximum of twelve hours.¹

The course in rural sociology is usually taken by upperclass or graduate students, though at the Massachusetts Agricultural College it is required of Sophomores, and the University of Kentucky reports a majority of Sophomore students.

In this connection should be noted a course which is required of all agricultural Freshmen at the University of Illinois, given by Dean Davenport and others. This is called "Country Life Problems" and is a one-hour course of the first semester open only to agricultural Freshmen. It consists of "problems of the farm; duties of citizenship; social, economic, and educational work in rural communities," and is evidently designed to open the eyes of the incoming agricultural students to the importance of these problems.

d) Instructor's Work: Only at the Massachusetts Agricultural College and the University of Wisconsin were instructors reported as giving their full time to this subject. However, at several other institutions the full time of the instructor is given to some two of the rural social sciences. Thus at Ohio State University and the University of North Carolina full time is given to rural economics and sociology, at the University of Kentucky to agricultural economics and education, and at the Kansas Agricultural College to rural education and rural sociology. Several institutions have men giving full time to agricultural economics. Several institutions are now developing extension work in the field of rural organization, and as this increases there will be a larger number of instructors giving full time to teaching and extension work in this field.²

¹ See also C. A. Dunniway, "Economic Science in Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges," *Proc. 29th Ann. Conv. Am. Assoc. Agr. Coll. and Exp. Stations*, p. 94.

² See W. D. Hurd, "Shall Extension Service Include the Social, Recreational, and Educational Improvement of Rural and Urban Districts?" *ibid.*, p. 232.

6. *Advanced and graduate courses.*—Only 5 colleges offer more than a single course in rural sociology, not counting those cases in which a course is duplicated in the summer school. The University of Kentucky offers a seminar in “Special Problems of Rural Life” for two hours throughout the year. The Washington State College also offers a “research course” of five hours. The University of Wisconsin offers a graduate course of two hours in “Rural Social Development.” The Oregon Agricultural College offers a rather unique course of three hours to upperclass men, entitled “The Literature and Exposition of Rural Life,” which seems to combine a study of the prose and poetry of rural life and their sociological and economic meaning. Teachers College, Columbia University, offers two full courses as a “Practicum in Rural Social Surveys.”

The Massachusetts Agricultural College, under the inspiration of President Butterfield, remains the only institution which has endeavored to furnish a complete series of courses in rural sociology for those wishing to take it as a major subject. It seems worth while to quote its announcement of elective courses, the required course having already been discussed (pp. 454 f.).

ELECTIVE COURSES¹

50. 1. *Social condition of rural people.*—For Juniors, Seniors may elect. (A) The Rural Status: Composition of the rural population, nature, extent, and causes of diseases and accidents, health agencies of control; extent and causes of rural delinquency and dependency, conditions of temperance, of sexual morality and family integrity; child labor, women's work and position; standard of living, size of family; cultural ideals; community consciousness and activity; standards of business conduct and of political ethics.

(B) Rural Social Psychology: Characteristics of the rural mind, character of hereditary and environmental influence; nature and effect of face-to-face groups; fashion, conventionality, custom, character of discussion and of public opinion. 3 class hours. Credit 3. Professor Phelan.

51. 2. *Rural government.*—For Juniors, Seniors may elect. A general survey of the development of rural government in the United States; origin of the New England town, its influence upon the West, advantages, development of efficiency, county government, the influence of the farmer in legislation, good-roads movement, credit, facilities, taxation, boards of agriculture,

¹Heavy faced type indicates the term in which the course is given.

Numbering of Courses:

1 to 25 inclusive Freshmen	50 to 74 inclusive Juniors
25 to 49 “ Sophomores	75 to 99 “ Seniors

agricultural colleges, and experiment stations in relation to rural welfare; national government; a general survey of political organizations and movements among farmers in the United States and foreign countries and their influence in shaping legislation; relation of the Department of Agriculture, postal system, the various national commissions and agencies to rural welfare. Lectures, readings, written exercises on assigned topics. 3 class hours. Credit 3. Professor Phelan.

52. 3. *Rural organization*.—For Juniors, Seniors may elect. A study of the organized agencies by which rural communities carry on their various forms of associated life, particularly a study of the ways by which the domestic, economic, cultural, religious, and political institutions contribute to rural betterment; principles underlying leadership, qualifications of the paid leader and the lay leader; the field of rural social service, national, state, and local, preparation and opportunity for service; rural community building, a study of organized ways and means by which aid is given local communities. 3 class hours. Credit 3. President Butterfield.

75. 1 and 3. *Farmers' organizations*.—For Seniors, Juniors may elect. The history, purposes, and achievements of the Grange, the Farmers' Union, farmers' clubs, village improvement associations, boys' clubs, etc.; the method, scope, and history of local, state, and national associations formed about some farm product, their influence in forming class consciousness and in shaping agrarian legislation; need of federation. Lectures, readings, and essays on assigned topics. 3 class hours. Credit 3. Professor Phelan.

76. 1. *Field work in rural sociology*.—For Seniors, Juniors may elect. This course is designed to meet the needs of students who wish to do some constructive work in rural social service while still in college. The work will be carried on in co-operation with the various college agencies engaged in rural service. Any project for which credit in this course is to be asked must first have the approval of the head of the department. Prerequisites, Rural Sociology 27 and 52. From 2 to 6 laboratory hours, credit 1 to 3. Professor Phelan.

77. 2. *Rural social surveys*.—For Seniors, Juniors may elect. A careful study of the theory and function of statistics, the limitations and difficulties in the use of statistics, the interpretation of statistical data, various methods of graphic representation; a study of surveys, kinds, and use, method of gaining information, the basis for conclusions, value of information gained. Text and lectures. 3 class hours. Credit 3. Professor Phelan.

78. 3. *Rural and business law*.—For Seniors, Juniors may elect. The work of this course will cover such points as land, titles, public roads, rights incident to ownership of live stock, contracts, commercial paper, and distinctions between personal and real property. Text, written exercises, lectures, and class discussions. 5 class hours. Credit 5. Professor Hart.

79. 1. *Seminar*. Credit 1 to 3. Professor Phelan.

80. 2. *Seminar*.

81. 3. *Seminar*.

Only 13 institutions out of 32 giving definite replies to question 10 state that they offer graduate work for the Master's degree. Only Harvard and the Massachusetts Agricultural College specifically mention that a Doctor's degree may be taken in this field, but doubtless most of the universities with well-organized departments in sociology would permit specialization in rural sociology by candidates for the Doctor's degree.

7. *Normal schools.*—The number and geographical distribution of the normal schools teaching rural sociology, as shown in Tables I and II, seem significant. In 20 of the 30 normal schools reported, the course is required of students in the rural-school course or of those working for a rural-teacher's certificate. In the states of Alabama, Oklahoma, Missouri, Nebraska, and Idaho the state authorities prescribing the courses of the normal schools have made it a required subject for rural teachers in the normal schools of those states. Evidently President Butterfield's standard—"Every [rural] teacher should have some knowledge of rural sociology. The normal schools should make this subject a required subject in the course especially for country teachers"¹—is being accepted. Indeed, the state of Nebraska has gone so far as to include "rural sociology" in its statute (chap. 232, Laws 1915) which fixes the requirements for the rural-teacher's course for its state normal schools.

Furthermore, there is a considerable amount of rural sociology which is being taught by the normal schools under the heads of educational sociology or rural education. Indeed, the curricula of some of the normal schools is fairly shot through with the rural-life idea. To give any adequate idea of the status of the subject in the normal schools a separate and more exhaustive study would be necessary.²

However, in passing, it is interesting to note the difference of attitude in regard to the work in rural sociology at two normal schools in the same state. One of these makes the subject one of

¹ *Chapters in Rural Progress*, p. 134.

² See Frederick R. Clow, "Sociology in Normal Schools," *American Journal of Sociology*, XVI, 253-65; John A. Keith, "The Place and Scope of Sociology in the Normal School," *Proceedings Nat. Ed. Assoc.*, 1915, p. 764.

the leading features of its curriculum, has a rural-sociology club, makes it a large feature of a monthly bulletin for rural teachers, and has made a national reputation by its work for the rural school and rural community. The instructor at the other institution in the same state replies:

The rural certificate is issued to persons who have completed a three-year high-school course, including certain subjects, rural sociology being one of those specified. The work is not very satisfactory because [?] of the immaturity of the students. I doubt whether you are particularly interested in this kind of "rural sociology," as it is not sociology. The college students of the normal schools do not teach in the country; they are only faintly interested in the country's problems, and it seems hardly worth while to require them to study rural sociology. They are required to take a brief course in general sociology.

In reply to question 5, asking for a definition, this instructor writes, "I have none. I should say the course as given here might well be termed a 'nuisance.'" One wonders whether the college-grade students at this institution receive as much benefit from their general sociology as do those in the secondary rural-certificate course from their rural sociology—whether it be sociology or not—at the other institution. Undoubtedly rural social problems will continue to receive increased attention at all normal schools and schools having normal training courses for rural teachers.

8. *Conclusion.*—Rural sociology seems to be the last field of social science to demonstrate that those phases of our human affairs which are most common and intimate are the last to engage our attention as objects of scientific study with a view to their more rational control. It also seems significant that the interest in, and the demand for, rural sociology have come because of its general appreciation upon the part of those who are closest to the country folk. With one or two notable exceptions it has not originated with the colleges or universities, for most of them have but tardily introduced the subject into their curricula in answer to the interest in rural social problems aroused by country-life conferences, farmers' institutes, granges, teachers' institutes, educational and religious conventions, farmers' clubs, agricultural extension schools, etc. The interest in the subject is genuine, for, though originally inspired by a few prophets of the rural awakening, it now

engages the keenest interest, not only of all progressive leaders in country life, but of increasing numbers of the people on the land.

It seems unnecessary to attempt to twist any conclusions from the data presented; the facts may better speak for themselves. The returns do, however, seem to raise certain very fundamental questions as to the best organization of courses of instruction in the social problems of rural life, so that they may best meet the needs of the average college student who does not expect to specialize in this field. The educational principles involved are those by which all college teaching must be judged, but their application to rural sociology seems to warrant further experimentation. It may well be questioned whether we now have, or possibly whether we ever shall have, a body of knowledge which may be termed the "principles of rural sociology"; but it is certain that we are rapidly accumulating a considerable definite knowledge concerning rural social problems and their solution, and that our people are vitally interested in them as never before. The boys' agricultural clubs have a motto, "Learn to do by doing." Probably we shall learn how to teach rural sociology in much the same way.